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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/079,475	02/19/2002	Spencer Gold	SMQ-089/P6550	6691

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EXAMINER

SUN, XIUQIN

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

2863

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Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/079,475

Applicant(s)

GOLD ET AL.

Examiner

Xiuqin Sun

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☐ Responsive to communication(s) filed on ____.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-38 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) ____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-6, 9-13, 16, 17 and 28-38 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 7, 8, 14, 15 and 18-27 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) ____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on ____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on ____ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.
- If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. ____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
- a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☒ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) 2.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s) ____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other:

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

1. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(e) the invention was described in (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or (2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2) of such treaty in the English language.

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2. Claim 1 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Gunther et al. (U.S. Pub. No. 2001/0021217).

Gunther et al. teach a controller for monitoring a temperature of an integrated circuit (see Figs. 2-4), comprising: a first interface for receiving a first value representative of a temperature of said integrated circuit (sections 0027-0029); a second interface for receiving a second value representative of a threshold temperature (sections 0027-0029); and a comparator for comparing said first value to said second value for determining whether said first value exceeds said second value, thereby determining if said first value indicates an excessive temperature of said integrated circuit (sections 0027-0029; 0050, 0051 and 0057); a serial temperature capture device for receiving a plurality of temperatures of said integrated circuit, wherein said serial temperature capture

device is adapted to receive a plurality of temperatures from a plurality of thermal sensors (sections 0033, 0051 and 0052). Gunther et al. further teach a system and method for monitoring a temperature of an integrated circuit (see Figs. 2-4), comprising the steps and means of: receiving a plurality of first values representative of a temperature of said integrated circuit (sections 0027-0029; 0033, 0051 and 0052); comparing said first values to a corresponding second value representative of a threshold temperature (sections 0027-0029; 0050, 0051 and 0057); determining whether an over-temperature condition of said integrated circuit exists based on an output of said means for comparing (sections 0027-0029; 0050, 0051 and 0057). Gunther et al. further teach: means for determining a response to said over-temperature condition (section 0050); means for digitally filtering said output of said means for comparing before determining whether an over-temperature condition of said integrated circuit exists (sections 0035-0038 and 0050); the act of executing said response to said over-temperature condition (sections 0058-0063).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

3. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

4. Claims 2-5, 9, 11, 13 and 16 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Gunther et al. in view of McMinn (U.S. Pat. No. 6098030).

Gunther et al. teach a system and method that includes the subject matter discussed above. Gunther et al. do not state explicitly that said controller further comprises: a temperature measurement buffer for holding said first value received from said first interface; sequentially providing said plurality of temperatures of said integrated circuit to said temperature measurement buffer; a threshold buffer corresponding to said temperature measurement buffer and adapted to store a second value representative of a threshold temperature; a microprocessor adapted to communicate with said temperature measurement buffer to read said first value and thermally profile said integrated circuit; a plurality of temperature measurement buffers, wherein each temperature measurement buffer is adapted to receive a value representative of a temperature of an integrated circuit; a serial temperature capture device for receiving a plurality of temperatures of said integrated circuit and providing said plurality of temperatures of said integrated circuit to said plurality of temperature measurement buffers.

McMinn discloses a thermal management system for an operating integrated circuit (see Abstract), and teaches a controller comprising: a temperature measurement buffer for holding said first value received from said first interface (col. 4, lines 47-54; col. 5, lines 41-56 and col. 6, lines 47-67); a threshold buffer corresponding to said temperature measurement buffer and adapted to store a second value representative of a threshold temperature (col.

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4, lines 47-54 and col. 7, lines 37-44); a microprocessor adapted to communicate with said temperature measurement buffer to read said first value and thermally profile said integrated circuit (col. 3, lines 1-7, lines 25-30; and col. 4, lines 35-46); a serial temperature capture device for receiving a plurality of temperatures of said integrated circuit and sequentially providing said plurality of temperatures of said integrated circuit to said temperature measurement buffer (col. 4, line 55 to col. 5, line 23); a plurality of temperature measurement buffers, wherein each temperature measurement buffer is adapted to receive a value representative of a temperature of an integrated circuit (Figs. 1-3; col. 4, line 55 to col. 5, line 23); a serial temperature capture device for receiving a plurality of temperatures of said integrated circuit and providing said plurality of temperatures of said integrated circuit to said plurality of temperature measurement buffers (Figs. 1-3; col. 4, line 55 to col. 5, line 23).

It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to include the teaching of McMinn in the system of Gunther et al. in order to provide a control circuit to thermally profile said integrated circuit in which both said temperature measurements and said threshold temperatures are programmable (McMinn, col. 3, lines 1-46).

5. Claim 17 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Gunther et al. in view of McMinn, as applied to claims 1 and 11 above, and further in view of in view of Pricer et al. (U.S. Pat. No. 5873053).

Gunther et al. and McMinn teach a system that includes the subject matter discussed above. The combination of Gunther et al. and McMinn do not mention

explicitly that: a plurality of threshold buffers corresponding to said plurality of temperature measurement buffers and adapted to store a plurality of second values representative of threshold temperatures.

Pricer et al. teach on-chip temperature sensors for control of chip operating temperature, wherein said sensors are capable of detecting undesirable temperature condition at different portion of said chip (col. 8, lines 7-26), and a threshold value is determined for each of said thermal sensor based on a location of said thermal sensor in said chip (col. 10, lines 27-38 and col. 11, lines 14-31).

It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to include the teaching of Pricer et al. in the combination of Gunther et al. and McMinn to have a plurality of McMinn threshold buffers for storing a plurality of threshold temperatures, in order to provide a thermal management system which can detect any undesirable temperature condition at different portion of the integrated circuit (Pricer et al., Abstract; col. 8, lines 18-26 and col. 10, lines 27-38).

6. Claim 29 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Gunther et al. in view of Pippin (U.S. Pat. No. 5838578).

Gunther et al. teach a system and method that includes the subject matter discussed above. Gunther et al. do not mention explicitly that: said controller further comprises an interface from said second interface to a microprocessor to enable said microprocessor to write to said second interface.

Pippin discloses a method and apparatus for programmable thermal sensor for an integrated circuit, and teaches a controller that comprises an interface to a microprocessor to enable said microprocessor to reset a threshold temperature (Fig. 9; and col. 13, lines 51-67).

It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to include the teachings of Pippin in the Gunther et al. system in order to reset dynamically the threshold temperature for thermal management of said integrated circuit (Pippin, Abstract).

7. Claims 6, 10, 12 and 28 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Gunther et al. in view of McMinn, as applied to claims 1-5 above, and further in view of Senyk (U.S. Pat. No. 6363490) and Ristic et al. (U.S. Pat. No. 5291607).

Gunther et al. and McMinn teach a system and method that includes the subject matter discussed above. The combination of Gunther et al. and McMinn do not mention explicitly that: said threshold buffer is located external to said controller; at least one of said plurality of temperature measurement buffers is located external to said controller; an interface from said first interface to a microprocessor to enable said microprocessor to read said first interface.

Senyk discloses a method and apparatus for monitoring the temperature of a processor, and teaches a controller that compares the temperature of the processor to a threshold, wherein said threshold is set by a buffer located external to said controller (col. 4, lines 32-42). Senyk further teaches that: a temperature sensing diode is located external to said controller.

It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to include the teaching of Senyk threshold buffer in the combination of Gunther et al. and McMinn in order to separate the controller from the sensed environment so that the performance of the controller is not affected by any undesirable temperature condition of the sensed environment (Ristic et al., col. 1, lines 31-67).

It would also have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to apply the teaching of Senyk arrangement for thermal sensor and controller to the combination of Gunther et al. and McMinn such that at least one of said temperature measurement buffers taught by McMinn is located external to said controller, in order to separate the controller from the thermal sensors so that the performance of the controller is not affected by any undesirable temperature condition of the sensed environment (Ristic et al., col. 1, lines 31-67).

Ristic et al. teach an interface to a microprocessor to enable said microprocessor to read output signals from a plurality of sensor cells (Fig. 1; col. 3, lines 21-32, lines 40-50 and col. 4, lines 50-63).

It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to apply the teaching of Ristic et al. to the Gunther et al. microprocessor in order to utilize said microprocessor to process data generated by said sensor cells (Ristic et al., col. 31-67).

8. Claims 30-32 and 35-38 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Gunther et al. in view of Pricer et al. (U.S. Pat. No. 5873053).

Gunther et al. teach a system and method that includes the subject matter discussed above. Gunther et al. do not mention explicitly that: a step and means for comparing said plurality of first values to a plurality of corresponding second values representative of a plurality of threshold temperatures.

Pricer et al. disclose on-chip temperature sensors for control of chip operating temperature, and teach: a plurality of threshold values are determined for a plurality of temperature sensing devices based on a location of said temperature sensing device in said chip (col. 10, lines 27-38 and col. 11, lines 14-31).

It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to include the teaching of Pricer et al. in the Gunther et al. system in order to provide a thermal management system which can detect any undesirable temperature condition at different portion of the integrated circuit (Pricer et al., Abstract and col. 10, lines 27-38).

9. Claims 33 and 34 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Gunther et al. in view of Pricer et al., as applied to claims 30 above, and further in view of Ristic et al. (U.S. Pat. No. 5291607).

Gunther et al. teach a system and method that includes the subject matter discussed above. Gunther et al. do not mention explicitly that: a microprocessor capable of reading said means for receiving a plurality of first values and communicating with said means for determining whether an over-temperature condition of said integrated circuit exists; and said microprocessor is capable of

writing to said means for receiving a plurality of first values and verifies correct functioning of the controller.

Ristic et al. disclose a microprocessor having environmental sensing capability, and teach that: said microprocessor is capable of reading a plurality of first values representative of the sensed environment, and communicating with means for determining whether an undesirable condition of said environment exists (Fig. 1; col. 3, lines 21-32, lines 40-50 and col. 4, lines 50-63); and said microprocessor is capable of writing to said means for receiving a plurality of first values and verifies correct functioning of the controller (col. 4, lines 50-63).

It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to include the teaching of Ristic et al. in the combination of Gunther et al. and Pricer et al. in order to separate the environmental sensing devices from the microprocessor and utilize said microprocessor to process data generated by said sensing devices and in turn allow control of power loads of the environment based on sensed signals (Ristic et al., col. 31-67).

Allowable Subject Matter

10. Claims 7, 8, 14, 15 and 18-27 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Reasons for Allowance

11. The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance:

The primary reason for the allowance of claims 7, 8, 14 and 15 is the inclusion of the limitation that said temperature measurement buffer is adapted to receive said first value by way of a single wire or a plurality of wires. It is this limitation found in each of the claims, as it is claimed in the combination, that has not been found, taught or suggested by the prior art of record which makes these claims allowable over the prior art.

The primary reason for the allowance of claims 18-27 is the inclusion of the limitation of a comparator response logic coupled to said comparator for determining whether an over-temperature condition in said integrated circuit exists. It is this limitation found in each of the claims, as it is claimed in the combination, that has not been found, taught or suggested by the prior art of record which makes these claims allowable over the prior art.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

Contact Information


12. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Xiuqin Sun whose telephone number is (703)305-3467. The examiner can normally be reached on 7:00am-4:30pm.

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If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, John Barlow can be reached on (703)308-3126. The fax phone numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are (703)872-9318 for regular communications and (703)872-9319 for After Final communications.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is (703)308-0956.


X.S.
April 30, 2003


John Barlow
Supervisory Patent Examiner
Technology Center 2800